

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

Claims 1-3 and 7-51 are pending. By this Amendment, claims 4-6 are cancelled, claims 1-3, 7-11 and 12-27 are amended, and new claims 28-51 are presented. Support for the amendments to claims 1-3, 7-11 and 12-27 and new claims 28-51 can be found, for example, in original claims 1-27. No new matter is added. In view of the foregoing amendments and following remarks, reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants thank the Examiner for the indication in the Office Action that claims 6, 10, 13, 16-19 and 22-24 recite allowable subject matter.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §112, Second Paragraph

The Office Action rejects claim 3 as indefinite under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph. By this Amendment, claim 3 is amended to obviate the rejection. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. §102

The Office Action rejects claims 1-5, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 20 and 25-27 under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) over U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2005/0090611 to Huffer et al. ("Huffer"). By this Amendment, claims 4 and 5 are cancelled, rendering the rejection moot as to those claims. As to the remaining claims, Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, which the Office Action indicates recites allowable subject matter. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is patentable over Huffer. Claims 2, 3, 7, 9, 11, 12, 14, 20 and 25-27 depend from

claim 1 and, thus, are also patentable over Huffer. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

A. Huffer and Lange

The Office Action rejects claim 8 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Huffer in view of U.S. Patent Application Publication No. US 2004/0171759 to Lange et al. ("Lange"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, which the Office Action indicates recites allowable subject matter. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is patentable over Huffer and Lange. Claim 8 depends from claim 1 and, thus, is also patentable over Huffer and Lange. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

B. Huffer and Allgaier

The Office Action rejects claims 15 and 21 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over Huffer in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,677,293 to Allgaier et al. ("Allgaier"). Applicants respectfully traverse the rejection.

By this Amendment, claim 1 is amended to incorporate the subject matter of claim 6, which the Office Action indicates recites allowable subject matter. Accordingly, amended claim 1 is patentable over Huffer and Allgaier. Claims 15 and 21 depend from claim 1 and, thus, are also patentable over Huffer and Allgaier. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection are respectfully requested.

New Claims

By this Amendment, new claims 28-51 are presented.

New claim 28 depends from claim 1 and, thus, is believed to be patentable for at least the reasons discussed above with respect to claim 1.

New claim 29 is directed to the subject matter of original claim 10, which the Office Action indicates recites allowable subject matter. Accordingly, new claim 29 is patentable over the references of record. Claims 30-51 depend from claim 29 and, thus, are also patentable over the references of record.

Conclusion

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that claims 1-27 are in condition for allowance. Prompt reconsideration and allowance are respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

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